



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

**National Scoliosis Awareness Month, June 2008**  
A Proclamation by Congresswoman Allyson Y. Schwartz

WHEREAS, we must increase the public's awareness of scoliosis and continue to work to help children, parents, adults, and health-care providers understand and recognize the complexities of spinal deformities such as scoliosis;

WHEREAS, scoliosis is an abnormal curvature of the spine and affects 2-3% of the population, or an estimated 6 million people in the United States. Scoliosis impacts infants, adolescents, and adults worldwide with little regard to race or socio-economic status, and there is no cure;

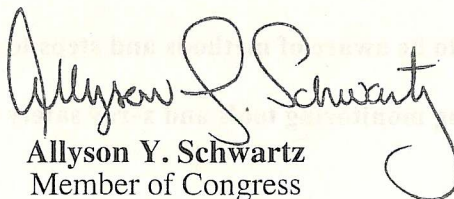
WHEREAS, the primary age of onset for scoliosis is 10-15 years of age, occurring equally among both genders, but with females eight times more likely to progress to a curve magnitude that requires treatment;

WHEREAS, scoliosis can impact a person's quality of life with limited activity, pain, reduced respiratory function, or diminished self-esteem;

WHEREAS, early detection through screening programs, treatment methods, pain management, or patient care may alleviate the worst effects of scoliosis;

WHEREAS, as we observe National Scoliosis Awareness Month, we renew our commitment to raising awareness of its serious impact;

THEREFORE, I, Allyson Y. Schwartz, Congresswoman, do hereby recognize June 2008 as National Scoliosis Awareness Month. I invite the President, the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me and the National Scoliosis Foundation in recognizing and reaffirming our commitment to increase awareness of scoliosis.

  
Allyson Y. Schwartz  
Member of Congress

National Scoliosis Foundation  
Points of Emphasis for National Scoliosis Awareness Month in June 2008

Patient Care

- *Every child regardless of race, creed, or socio-economic status deserves equal opportunity for the early detection of scoliosis and the least invasive, less costly, most effective treatment options possible.*
- *It is every patient's right and obligation to be informed about their condition and the treatment options available to them.*
- *We must find the Cause, Prevention, and Cure for scoliosis to eliminate the confusion and doubt families have about the best course of treatment, and ultimately end the physical, emotional, and financial burdens of this condition.*
- *At all levels of care patients deserve Help & Hope and come to know through education, encouragement, and empowerment that they can go on living with this condition.*

Patient Screening

- **“(AAOS), (SRS), (POSNA), and the (AAP), do not support any formal recommendations against scoliosis screening, given the available literature.”**
- **“All four societies recognize the benefits that can be provided by effective clinical screening programs, including 1) the potential prevention of deformity progression by brace treatment and 2) the earlier recognition of severe deformities requiring operative correction.”**
- **“The AAOS, SRS, POSNA, and AAP believe that school screening personnel should be educated in the detection of spinal deformity.”**

Patient Privacy

- **Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)**
- **Genetic testing for scoliosis offers some potentially exciting new horizons in the ability to detect and treat this condition before it becomes a spinal deformity. In fact, it may soon be possible to identify which patients are likely to progress and require more aggressive treatments and those who may not. This is great news that offers a new level of Help & Hope.**
- **But there are also a variety of concerns with genetic testing at this time, such as potential misuse of genetic information by insurers etc. That is why the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) is important and something which should be put in place.**

Patient Protection

- **Patients and providers need to be aware of methods and steps to safer health care and less medical errors.**
- **Clinicians must utilize existing monitoring tools and x-ray safety methods to minimize radiation of children and adults.**
- **New or enhanced diagnostic & monitoring techniques must be researched and developed to reduce or eliminate dependency on x-rays.**